

To The Bright Honorable The Marquis

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P. Presented by

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S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

MOUNTFIELD, in SUSSEX.

Handwritten signature



S. E. R.

PREACHED AT

W. V. FIELD, R. S. B. K.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

MOUNTFIELD, in SUSSEX,

Graham (W.) K

BY THE REVEREND LORD PRESTON.



L O N D O N:

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S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

MOUNTFIELD, IN VERMONT

By the Reverend Isaac R. H. C. M.



L O N D O N

Printed for J. Widdows, at No. 1, Court Street, London.
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TO THE
QUEEN'S
MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

THIS
SERMON

IS HUMBLY ADDRESSED,

BY

HER MAJESTY'S

MOST DUTIFUL, AND LOYAL

SUBJECT AND SERVANT,

PRESTON.

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P R E S T O N

A

S E R M O N.

In the fifth Chapter of the first Epistle of St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy; former Part of the fourteenth Verse.

I will therefore that the Younger Women marry, bear Children, guide the House.

WHAT excellent Advice! how agreeable to the better Part of human Nature!

Amongst all the curious Studies, and Amusements, with which Mankind entertain themselves, and amongst that Variety of Passions, which the Almighty for his wise Purposes hath planted within us, there is none so useful, and beneficial; none which affords the Mind greater Joy, and Self-complacency, than Love, and Unity.

Love is the most amiable Passion imaginable: It adorns, and does Honour to human Nature,

Upon Minds susceptible of all the tender Feelings of Humanity, St. Paul's excellent Advice must, one would think, produce

produce its desired Effect. He well knew that this heavenly Passion cuts off every illiberal Sentiment, and that, as the Frailty of human Nature is very great, and we are prone to Evil, and averse to Good, Marriage is a proper Restraint upon our bad Inclinations. He says, *that many had already turned aside to Satan*; and therefore, in order to put a Stop to others turning aside to him, he advises the younger Women to marry, bear Children, and guide the House. He declares Marriage to be honourable among all Men: He tells us that it was ordained for the Procreation of Children, as a Remedy to avoid Fornication, and for the mutual Society, Help, and Comfort that the one ought to have of the other, both in Prosperity and Adversity.

These were the sensible Motives, which induced St. Paul to recommend this honourable State, Matrimony. It is not only an honourable, but an happy State, as, when a real Esteem for each other joins the happy Pair, Marriage becomes a Paradise upon Earth; a Foretaste of Heaven itself. This evinces the absolute and indispensable Necessity of Parents fixing upon Persons, who have the same honest Notions of Right and Wrong with their own Children. Friendship, Cicero informs us, consists of wishing for, and having an Aversion to good and bad Things. But, alas! in this refined and enlightened Age, Money, not Merit, determines the Choice of Parents. The Question is not, "Has she Virtue" and good Sense? but how much Cash?" He, we read, *who carried the Bag, was Satan*: an Antidote surely to the Love of Riches. Why, therefore, are Riches the chief Motive? The Strength of *Goliath*, the Valour of *Job*, the Beauty of *Abfalom*, the Wisdom of *Achitophel*, the great Possessions of

of the Young Man in the Gospel, and the Promotion of *Haman*, were Snares to the Possessors. Religion, Virtue, Honesty, and white-robed Innocence are the best Recommendations to Love and Esteem.

I beg Leave to trouble you with a few Arguments in Regard to Marriage: We were born for Society; the softer Sex humanizes Mankind: We had been Brutes without Partners of our Joys and Sorrows. *Two*, say the Scriptures, *are better than One*. Besides, though Politics are foreign to the Pulpit, the more a Nation encreases in Population, it becomes the more powerful. How necessary therefore is Marriage, says the ingenuous Mr. *Houlton*, at a Time when our Nation is so thin of Men, that Thousands are wanted to perform the common Works of Husbandry and Labour!

Enter the House of some worthy Man; see what Harmony subsists in it! Whilst the Prodigal is whiling away his Time in Dissipation and Futility; *in leading silly Women captive, in tossing them to and fro by his foolish Discourse*, in idle Parties of Pleasure; *in following a Multitude to do Evil*; The good Husband (you have an Example in this Parish) remains at Home. His Wife, with all the Graces waiting upon her Steps, softens every Sorrow. Like the good Woman in the Proverbs, *she does him Good, and not Evil, all the Days of her Life: She seeks Wool and Flax, and works willingly with her Hands: She riseth also while it is yet Night, and giveth Meat to her Household, and a Portion to her Maidens: She layeth her Hands to the Spindle, and her Hand holdeth the Distaff: She stretcheth out her Hand to the Poor; yea, she reacheth forth her Hands to the Needy: She looketh well to the Ways of her Household, and eateth*

not the Bread of Idleness. Her Children rise up, and call her blessed; her Husband also, and he praiseth her.

The Children run the envied Kiss to share.

The Tear's forgot, says the ingenious Mr. Grey, as soon as shed. How delightful is the Reflection to the fond Parents, *that they have Lands for their Children, which, says the Royal Psalmist, they may call after their own Names!* This affords them an additional Pleasure, a Reflection that they will not leave their Children, *those Olive Branches*, subject to Penury and Want, to all the Hardships and Cruelties of an hard-hearted cruel World, affords them the highest Joy and Self-complacency.

Let us consider what an excellent Example his Majesty, the Father of his People, has given us as to the holy State of Matrimony. He is blessed with a Queen, formed by Nature to make him happy: A Queen, who is endowed with all the amiable Virtues necessary to adorn her exalted Station, and which are an Honour to the softer Sex: A Queen, as accomplished as a Courtier, with all the amiable Graces of a true Christian.

A mutual Esteem in the conjugal State renders our Passage through this Vale of Tears and Misery, as comfortable as possible. The fond Husband, and affectionate Wife partake of each other's Joys and Sufferings. A mutual Esteem *is that Oil of Gladness, which renders them joyful above their Fellows:* A mutual Esteem is that amiable Quality, which links them together with a sacred Bond of sympathy.

As

As bearing Children is a natural Consequence of Marriage, I shall not trouble you with any Reflections upon that Head.

A mutual Esteem will preserve that tender Affection, which at first united them. Without a mutual Esteem what are all the Graces of an engaging Person, or the Refinements of a polite Education? Without this, though they may abound in all the good Things of Life, they cannot have a true Relish of them. Without this they will be tasteless and insipid. A mutual Esteem keeps the Flame of Love alive, and hushes every rude Passion. A mutual Esteem induces them not to confine their Thoughts to this Life only, *but to consider their latter End*; to have proper Apprehensions of their eternal Concerns, and spiritual Interests, *to pursue the Things, which belong to their Peace*. A mutual Esteem renders the Husband and Wife, in a Straw-built Cottage, equally happy with the noblest Personages in their stately Seats. Where there is a mutual Esteem, the Man who earns his little Livelihood by the Sweat of his Brows, is equally happy with him, *who is clothed in fine Linen, and fares sumptuously every Day*. Lucinda, blessed with a numerous Progeny, whom with all a tender Parent's Care she has by Example, as well as Precept, educated in the Paths of Religion, and formed to Virtue, is delighted to see the happy Effects: Her Children, from a Principle of filial Duty, pay her the grateful Tribute of Respect. At the same Time Theron, who in the Service of the Almighty has for many Years conscientiously discharged the Duties of his sacred Function, sees his Wife's Virtues bloom in his Children. These, my Christian Brethren, are the Effects of

a mutual Esteem, which induces all good Parents *to train up their Children in the Way they should go, a Way, which leads to Virtue, to Happiness, to Heaven.*

St. Paul says, that it is necessary that *they should guide the House.* A frugal Care of a Family, of educating Children properly, *bringing them up in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord,* are Duties which reflect a Credit upon Wives. Oeconomy puts a Stop to Impositions, and prevents Parents falling a Prey to People of bad Dispositions: Shameful Impositions are the natural Consequences of want of Care in secular Concerns. The Woman, therefore, *who guides her House,* may avoid them. *If they guide the House,* they will learn not to be idle; *they will not wander about from House to House; they will not be Tatlers, and busy Bodies, speaking Things which they ought not.*

To conclude: As to you, who are married, my Advice is, that in this your Passage to another, and better World, you *do not quarrel by the Way, but learn to be of one Heart and one Mind.* Love each other, not merely in Profession, and Compliment, but in Truth and Reality. Reflect upon St. Paul's Advice, *My little Children,* says he, *let us not love in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth.* He well knew that Love polishes the Manners, gives a genteel and generous Temper to the Soul, calls forth and displays all the secret Graces of the Mind, opens their Beauties, and sets them in the most delicate Point of View; like the Dew of *Hermon,* which fell upon the Hill of *Sion,* refreshed the Beds of Spices, awakened the Flowers, and improved the natural Charms of that fair Place, the Joy of the whole Earth. He well knew
that

that Love is *that* warm, vital Current, which flows in our Veins, beats with the Pulse, and even mingles with the Soul; that it enlarges the Heart, inspires its Votary with the most tender Sentiments, induces him to cultivate the most sincere, and consequently lasting Friendships, to form the most tender Alliances, and, when improved into a mutual Esteem, is the noblest Passion of which the Soul is susceptible. *He therefore advises Husbands to love their Wives, and not to be bitter against them.*

Husbands, I conjure you to consider that Love constitutes a temporal Heaven upon Earth, and gives us a Forecast of those Joys, which are reserved for us in Heaven, *when our Corruptible Part shall have put on Incorruption*, and we are admitted into his Presence *Who, says St. John, is Love itself.* Consider, I conjure you, that you are Candidates for Heaven, *where pure Love is.* May therefore your Hearts be open to the soft Sensations of social Sympathy and Love. May Principles of Good-nature unite your Hearts, form a perfect Harmony, a conformity of Sentiments, and an indissoluble Friendship. Consider that you are not to live here for ever; that the Time will most assuredly come, when you will be separated from each other, *that in the Midst of Life you are in Death.* Consider that Death's fatal Darts fly so promiscuously, that you may probably be the next Victims. *Be ye therefore always ready, for in such an Hour as you think not, the final Summons may come.* Death is inexorable. The Lustre of the sprightly Eye, says the ingenious Mr. *Hervey*, the Bloom of bridal Youth, the Honours of superior Birth, the universal Esteem of your Wife's Acquaintance, or even the spotless Integrity of her Character are no Security.

Ah,

Ah! in what Perils is vain Life engaged!
 What slight neglects, what trivial Faults destroy
 The hardiest Frame! of Indolence, of Toil
 We die; of Want, of Superfluity.
 The all-surrounding Heaven, the vital Air
 Is big with Death.

You may yourselves be cut off, and hurried out of the World
 by some unforeseen, unfortunate Accident——and then

When the silver Cord of Life is rent asunder,
 How lov'd, how valu'd once avails thee not,
 To whom related, or by whom begot.
 A Heap of Dust alone remains of thee,
 'Tis all thou art;——and all the proud shall be.

Ye Wives, ye, who were sent into the World to humanize
 us, reflect upon St. Paul's sensible Advice, *Wives, submit your-*
selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord. The Husband
is Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church;
therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ; so be you to your
own Husbands in every Thing. Let not your Adorning be that
outward Adorning of plaiting the Hair, or putting on costly
Apparel; but let it be the hidden Man of the Heart in that,
which is not corruptible; even the Ornament of a meek, and quiet
Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price. Humility
 is

is the best Dress you can appear in. This exceeds the Terma-
 gent in all her Embroidery, whose Voice often exceeds ~~Nestor's~~,
 when, says an ingenious Divine, the Drum of Ambition will
 cease to beat in your Ears; when those Eyes, which once cap-
 tivated every Beholder, will grow dim with Age, and you are
 upon the Confines of the Grave, *how comfortable, how joyful,*
how ravishing will be the Reflection that each of you has dis-
 charged her Duty, as a good Wife, and an indulgent Parent; that
 each of you has been loving, and faithful to her Husband, kind
 to her Children, has taught them their Duty to God, their
 Neighbour, and themselves, *has trained them up in the Way they*
should go, namely, the Paths of Piety, and Virtue, cultivated
 their Morals, and, that in Return for this indulgent care, if the
 Span of their Lives be prolonged, their virtuous Behaviour may
 be the Staff of your Age, and a Balm for declining Nature.

Stentor?

Happy, truly happy will ye be. You will have the Favour
 of a favourable God, the Love and Esteem of all good Men,
 and the Approbation (joyful Circumstance!) of your Con-
 sciences.

As to you, who intend to enter into this comfortable State,
 let real Merit, not any other Consideration, be the Object of
 your Esteem; let the beauties of the Mind, not the Person, as
 they are more amiable, and lasting, determine you in your
 Choice; be sincere in your Professions of Regard; continue the
 same Regard after Marriage, as before; be a comfort to each
 other in the Decline of Life, and live, in such a pious, ex-
 emplary Manner, that, when this transitory Life is ended, our
 Saviour may say to each of you, *Well done, my good, and faith-*

ful

ful Servants, enter into the Joy of thy Lord; be happy in the Heaven of Heavens.—Which, that we may all be, may God of his infinite Mercy grant; to whom, the God of Love and Peace, who created us; to Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who redeemed us; and to God, the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us, be ascribed by us, and by all Men, as is most due, all Honour, Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

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